

CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

NOVEMBER 1980

52



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October 31 - November 9, 1980

Plants of the Castlemaine District

ROUGH MINT -BUSH

(Prostanthera denticulata)

Flowering Aug-Sept.

This attractive shrub, with its mauve flowers, can turn a hillside mauve in a good season.

It is found in various places around the area, and is particularly good in Kalimna and north into the west area of the Moonlight Flat pine plantation where the pines have been cleared and in the old area.

The metre high straggling shrub does not usually live for a long time though so the "good" areas change every few years.

The leaves are small, rough, and narrow, and are typically aromatic.

Next Meeting Friday November 14

Speaker : Mr Dale Gibbons

Subject : Owls

In the previous issue this was advertised as a members night.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Friday of each month (except January), at 8 p.m. in the Castlemaine Education Centre (SEC buildings, Mostyn Street, Castlemaine).

Visitors and prospective members are invited to attend the club's sessions.



NATIVE CONIFERS

by Terry Collins

Mr Bill Middleton gave a very interesting talk on station 3WV last July in which he highlighted Australian conifers. Naturally when the word "pine tree" is mentioned, nearly all people immediately think of the un-Australian *Pinus insignis* or *radiata*. However although only few in varieties, Australia does have some pines of its own.

Tasmania has the Huon Pine (*Dacrydium Franklinii*) which grows naturally along its rivers and is the concern of so many people that the flooding of the Franklin River will destroy so many of these fine trees. The wood was used in the past for boat building and other special purposes. It grows to about 20 m and is similar in appearance to a Cypress. Tasmania has other native conifers that are found nowhere else. The Celery Top Pine (*Phyllocladus asplenifolius*), King Billy Pine (*Athrotaxis selaginoides*) and Pencil Pine (*A. cupressoides*). The pencil Pine not to be confused with the introduced Pencil Pine from the Mediterranean.

Queensland has the Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*) which grows to about 20 m. but often grown as a pot plant in a large container or tub. This species can be confused with the Monkey Puzzle Tree which is a native of Chile. The Hoop Pine (*A. cunninghamii*) grows taller than the Bunya and is famous for the timber it produces.

Western Australia has a genus of small conifers called *Actinostrobus* and one, the Swan River Cypress (*A. pyramidalis*), could be worth growing here. It is a dense shrub growing to about 3 m. and the spreading branches stay close to the ground. It is hardy and will stand cutting back. The Cypress Pines or native pines belong to the genus *Callitris* and there are about 20 species and widely distributed. Most of them are trees of the drier areas. They are often very similar looking and positive identification of some can be difficult.

The common native Pine in much of Western Victoria is Slender Cypress Pine (*C. preissii*), and the species that is common throughout N.S.W. and occurs in north and east of our state is White Cypress Pine or Murray Pine (*C. columellaris*). It likes light sandy soils and a warm district. A native pine that will grow in a cooler area is the Oyster Bay Pine (*C. rhomboidea*). It occurs naturally in the Grampians and other parts of south western Victoria, growing to a height of about 6 m. Although a native of Norfolk Island, the Norfolk Island Pine, (*A. heterophylla*), is well known in Australia and many fine specimens grace our parks and towns.

A BIRD LIST FOR THE CASTLEMAINE GOLF COURSE

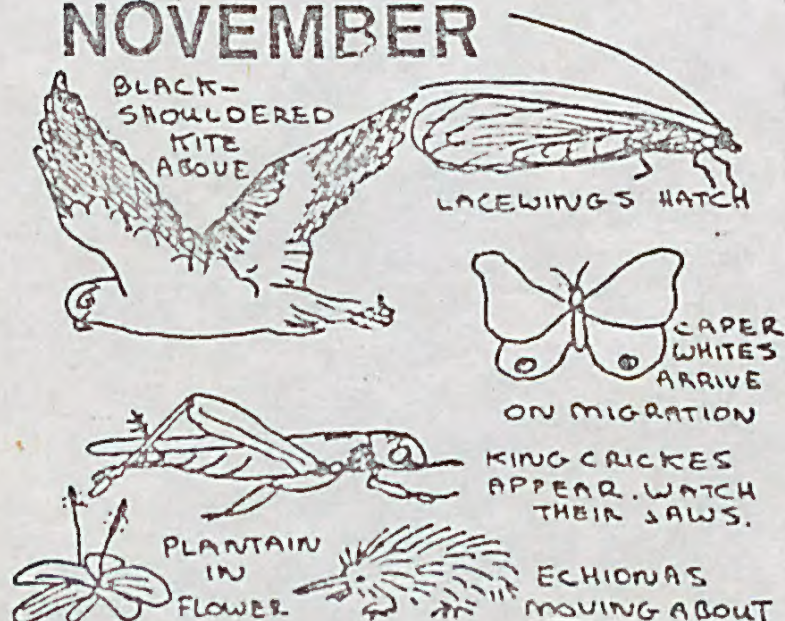
Jan 1980 till June .

Supplied by Stan Bruton

White - faced Heron
Common Bronze-wing Pigeon
Little Pied Cormorant
Black-fronted Dotterel
Superb Blue Wren
Australian Raven
Galah
Diamond Firetail Finch
White-browed Scrub Wren
Dusky Woodswallow
Fuscous Honeyeater
Kookaburra
Restless Flycatcher
Eastern Shrike-Tit
Rufous Whistler
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Fairy Martin
White-browed Babbler
Richards' Pipit
White Ibis
Welcome Swallow
Brown Falcon
Little Lorikeet
Brown Thornbill
Flame Robin
Long-billed Corella
Orange-winged Sittella
Crimson Rosella
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Australian Magpie
Magpie Lark
Eastern Rosella
Noisy Miner
Musk Lorikeet
Willie Wagtail
Red-rumped Parrot
Goldfinch
Brown Treecreeper
Grey Currawong
Spurwing Plover
Red-browed Firetail Finch
White-plumed Honeyeater
Striated Pardalote
House Sparrow
Scarlet Robin
Starling
Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Little Raven
Grey Shrike-Thrush
Spotted Pardalote
Jacky Winter
Purple-crowned Lorikeet
Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
White-winged Chough
Golden Whistler
Speckled Warbler
Brown-headed Honeyeater
Peregrine Falcon

NOVEMBER



This is a space which might have been filled with an article from one of our members. Please keep in mind that your editor is always extremely grateful for any contributions. So rack your brains for any ideas and put them down on paper.

It was reported that Rainbow Birds appeared this year on October 15. Any other sightings ?

DIARY

Sunday Nov 2: Excursion - to the Maldon Forest. (Formerly known as the Muckleford Forest). To be held as a contribution to the Castlemaine State Festival. Depart from the Castlemaine Railway station yard at 2 p.m. Note the change from the usual assembly area. Leaders will be Max Winterbottom, G. Sitch, E. Perkins.

Saturday Nov 1. 10 a.m. Excursion. A short walk through Kaweka to view the wildflowers. This is another Festival activity. Similar tours will be held on the same day at 3 p.m. and also

Saturday Nov 8 at 10 a.m.

Friday Dec 12 "International Night" meeting

Mr Max Winterbottom will speak on his recent trip to Indonesia.

As this is the final meeting of the year, members are asked to bring along a plate of goodies for a wind-up supper.

Saturday Nov 15 and Sunday Nov 16 Campout Locality : the Grampians
On Saturday there will be a tour of the waterfalls of the Halls Gap area, and on Sunday a walk to the Major Mitchell Plateau. This is expected to be reasonably strenuous.

Saturday Dec 13 Excursion to Expedition Pass.

This is to be a bird spotting outing. so bring your binocs and your bird book(s).

All expert birdos in the club are invited to come along and assist fellow members with identification.

Friday, November 14. Monthly Meeting

Mr Dale Gibbons of Bendigo will speak on Owls.

KOALA SHOT AT WATTLE FLAT

On August 27th, 1858, a correspondent to the "Mount Alexander Mail" writes : "A few days ago, I saw a remarkably fine specimen of the native bear, as it is called, though it resembles a species of marsupial sloth more than anything else. The animal was shot by Mr Collings Jnr., in the vicinity of Wattle Flat. It was about two feet and a half long, and was covered with a thick coat of coarse fur. When brought down, the bear had two or three young ones in its pouch, but these were quickly devoured by the dog. The animal was remarkably tenacious of life, and showed signs of animation after it had twice received the contents of the gun. It is said that the specimen is much larger than those which were seen in the Melbourne Exhibition. The owner of the prize intends to have it preserved.

For Sale

10,000 Sweet Briar plants for sale. Apply to H. Sutcliffe,
Eagle Tavern, Campbells Creek June 18th, 1858

from Ray Bradfield